The Migrant

A Quarterly Journal
Devoted To Tennessee Birds

Published by
The Tennessee
Ornithological
Society

JUNE 2023
Vol. 94, No. 2

THE MIGRANT
A QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF ORNITHOLOGY
Published by

THE TENNESSEE ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY
The TOS is a non-profit, educational, scientific and conservation organization.

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Tennessee Ornithological Society, 5886 Wilshire Drive, Nashville, TN 37215
Printed by: Russell Printing Options, 1800 Grand Ave., Knoxville, TN 37916
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THE MIGRANT

Published by the Tennessee Ornithological Society
to Record and Encourage the Study of Birds in Tennessee
Issued in March, June, September and December

VOL. 94 JUNE 2023 NO. 2

The Migrant 94(2): 25-27, 2023

FIRST PHOTOGRAPHIC EVIDENCE OF A COMMON MERGANSER NEST IN TENNESSEE

Carol Story
Walland, Tennessee

On 21 April 2023 my husband, Don Story, was out by our barn in Blount County preparing to burn a large brush pile. He pushed on a large stump to see if it was rotten enough to push over with his tractor. When he pushed, a large bird flew out of the stump. I asked him what it looked like, and he replied, "It was big and sounded like a helicopter coming out of there. I was just trying to get out of its way!"

The stump was of three ash trees (*Fraxinus* sp.) that had grown together over the years and then been killed by ash borers (*Agrilus planipennis*). About 5 – 10 years before we had cut the stump at about 2 m. high (6 ft.); the saw would not cut through the trees any lower, and there was the possibility of imbedded fence wire any lower than that.

Figure 1. Photo by Carol Story.

The next day the bird had returned to the nest, and I was able to take a photograph (Figure 1), but I couldn't identify the species. I sent the photo to friends Linda and David Caughron, who are nature photographers; they believed the bird was a female Common Merganser, (*Mergus merganser*) but were not certain because the beak wasn't orange-red. Linda brought her camera the next day to take a picture to enlarge for better detail; the bird hissed at her, so she didn't try again. Linda sent my photos and information about size to several experienced birders, and all agreed on the identification as Common Merganser.

I took daily pictures with my cell phone; I am 1.6m tall (5'3") and could not see into the stump so I just held my cell phone (Figure 2) and took random shots of the bird on the nest and the eggs (Figure 3). Sometimes she would look up towards me; some days she seemed to be asleep, but she never made a sound. Linda and David put up a trail camera, but the photos showed only a black blob shape as apparently she entered and exited the stump too quickly to be caught by the camera.

My final photo was 10 May which showed nestlings (Figure 4); when I returned on 11 May she and the nestlings were gone. Don and I went to our creek that day to see if we could find them, but we never saw them again. I wish we could look forward to her returning next year, but we seriously doubt the stump will survive that long.

I wish to thank Linda and David Caughron for their assistance with photos and for communicating with Ron Hoff who compiled the information and photos.

Figure 2. Photo by Linda Caughron.

Figure 3. Photo by Carol Story.

Figure 4. Photo by Carol Story.

EASTERN PHOEBE MAKES MULTIPLE VISITS TO A WHITE-TAILED DEER

T. David Pitts
Martin, Tennessee

Eastern Phoebes (*Sayornis phoebe*) sometimes accompany white-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*) and forage on insects and other small arthropods that were either attracted to the deer or were flushed by movements of the deer. Davis (2009) watched an Eastern Phoebe perch on the back of a deer in Knox County, Tennessee, inspect the base of the deer's tail, fly out to capture insects, and then return to the deer. The deer possibly flushed some of the insects that the phoebe captured. Baruzzi et al. (2017) used camera traps to study white-tailed deer in Mississippi. Photographs from their cameras documented an Eastern Phoebe perching on a white-tailed deer, an Eastern Phoebe following a white-tailed deer and capturing insects flushed by the deer, and an Eastern Phoebe foraging for ectoparasites, possibly ticks, on a deer. I describe here another example of an Eastern Phoebe associating with deer.

From 0638 to 0647 CST on 27 November 2020, I observed five white-tailed deer as they slowly walked and foraged, parallel to a garden fence, across the back yard of my home in rural Weakley County, Tennessee. As I watched from inside my house, approximately 25 m from the deer, an Eastern Phoebe made five trips to a doe that was leading the other deer. The phoebe made each of its visits while the deer was stationary. Between trips to the deer, the phoebe perched on the garden fence, which was approximately 3 m away. I estimated that each of the phoebe's trips to the deer lasted 5 to 10 seconds. I did not see the phoebe visit any of the other deer.

During each of its first three trips to the deer, the phoebe flew in a straight line from its perch on the garden fence to the posterior side of the deer's left front leg. While hovering near the area where the leg joined the deer's body, the phoebe used its bill to probe and pull at either the deer's hair or an item in the hair. I could not determine with my unaided eyes if the phoebe successfully removed anything from the deer. Phoebes commonly use mammal hair as a nest construction material. Wilson (1828) noted that Eastern Phoebes frequently line their nests with horse (*Equus caballus*) hair, and Bendire (1895) reported that in some areas of Canada the native people call them "Moose-birds" because the phoebes nesting there often line their nests with moose (*Alces alces*) hair. However, during late November, the phoebe I observed was unlikely to be gathering nest material.

On each of its last two trips to the deer, the phoebe perched on the deer's rump and faced the deer's tail. During each of these visits, the deer turned its head, looked in the direction of the phoebe, and flicked its tail. Immediately following the movement of the deer's tail, the phoebe flew from the deer and returned to the garden fence. While perched on the deer, the phoebe did not probe the deer's hair or make any other type of foraging movement.

During my observations the air temperature was 3^0 C, the wind was calm, and the sky was clear. I did not detect any insect activity. I doubt that the phoebe I observed was attempting to capture insects that either had been attracted to the deer or were flushed by the deer. I suspect that during the first three trips I observed, the phoebe was attempting to remove ticks from the deer's left front leg. During the last two trips that I observed, I suspect the phoebe was searching for ticks around the base of the deer's tail, an area that is difficult to

groom and, therefore, more likely to have attached ticks. Ticks constitute only a small part of Eastern Phoebe diets (Beal 1912), but on a cool morning when insects are not readily available, a hungry and opportunistic phoebe might be attracted to the ticks on a deer. The numbers of ticks present on deer are highest during the warm months, but many Tennessee deer continue to host ticks during November (Bloemer et al. 1988). On 23 November 2020, four days before I observed the deer and phoebe in my yard, James L. Byford (personal communication) harvested a local deer that had two conspicuous ticks on its left shoulder area. Visible ticks on the leading deer in my yard, but not on the other four deer, might explain why the phoebe concentrated its activities on her.

In response to the phoebe landing on its rump, the deer that I observed flicked its tail. Otherwise, the phoebe's activities did not appear to affect the deer's behavior. I suspect that a phoebe had previously associated with the deer, and the deer was accustomed to the presence of a phoebe. I did not see a phoebe in the yard after the deer departed. Perhaps the phoebe continued traveling with the deer after I lost sight of them.

Eastern Phoebes may accompany deer more frequently than the few published records might indicate. Davis (2009) stated that she was aware of other records of phoebes foraging on insects flushed by deer, but she did not cite them, perhaps because they had been verbally communicated. Baruzzi et al. (2017) hypothesized that foraging Eastern Phoebes frequently associate with white-tailed deer. However, such interactions have rarely been reported, possibly because of the inability of many observers to correctly identify phoebes or the mistaken belief that such interactions are already well documented.

Foraging Eastern Phoebes are known to associate with mammals other than white-tailed deer. Bendire (1895) quoted a letter in which Dr. William L. Ralph "...tells me that in Florida the Phoebe frequently alights on the backs of cattle [*Bos taurus*] and follows them around, catching the flies on these animals, and fluttering above them in search of insects." While hunting deer in North Carolina on a warm November day, Brimley (1934) attracted numerous mosquitoes, which, in turn, attracted an Eastern Phoebe. It initially perched on Brimley's gun barrel and then on his hands and hunting cap. The phoebe captured several mosquitoes from Brimley's face and continued taking mosquitoes from his face even as he began walking in an effort to discourage the phoebe, whose numerous pecks irritated the skin of his face. Brimley (1934) reported that three other deer hunters in that area later described to him similar visits by a small bird that he suspected was a phoebe, possibly the same one that had visited him.

Additional reports of phoebe and mammal interactions, including phoebes accompanying livestock, are needed to clarify (1) how often phoebes search for food on or in the vicinity of mammals and (2) if phoebe and mammal associations are beneficial to both parties. Considering the amount of time phoebes spend in aquatic habitats, foraging phoebes might also forage on mosquitoes attracted to reptiles such as turtles.

I thank James L. Byford, Eric C. Pelren, and Eric M. Schauber for assistance in manuscript preparation.

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2023 TENNESSEE SPRING BIRD COUNTS

Ron Hoff
Loudon, Tennessee

Seven spring bird counts were held this year. Two hundred fifty-two observers recorded 206 species across the state. The weather was mild overall with no major precipitation or high wind. Temperatures ranged from a chilly 40° F in Elizabethton to 83° F in Shelby County. Anhinga was a new species for the count, bringing the all-time total to 279 (+ 1 hybrid). Other count highlights included Black-billed Cuckoo, Black-bellied Plover, Long-billed Dowitcher, Least Tern, Least Bittern, Marsh and Sedge Wrens, and Red Crossbill. Notable misses for this count included American Woodcock, Cattle Egret, Loggerhead Shrike, Horned Lark and Wilson's Warbler.

The following species were all recorded in record high numbers since 2001: Hooded Merganser, Osprey, Downy Woodpecker, Fish Crow, Carolina Chickadee, Brown-headed Nuthatch, House Wren, and Swainson's Thrush.

The following species were all reported in the lowest or very low numbers since 2001: Black-bellied Whistling Duck, Northern Bobwhite (continuing a downward spiral in the state), Black-crowned Night-Heron, Barn Swallow, Cerulean Warbler.

The counts in the table are arranged geographically from west to east. Taxonomic order follows the American Ornithological Society (AOS) Checklist of North and Middle American Birds, the 63rd supplement (2022) to the AOS Checklist. F/Y = feeder/yard watcher.

COUNTY SUMMARIES

Blount County (BLNT) – 0215-2200. Weather: cloudy/clear; wind SSW 0-1 mph; 59-82° F. Count highlights included Least Bittern, Black-billed Cuckoo, Barn Owl, Common Raven, Bank Swallow, Swainson's Warbler, Dickcissel, Bobolink, Red Crossbill, and Pine Siskin. Observers: Jean J. Alexander, Jenna Atma, Kat Barrow, Rick Barrow, Christie Bass, Warren Bielenberg, Wanda DeWaard, Drisana Etayo, Andrew Feldt, Marian D. Fitzgerald, Tom E. Fitzgerald, Sandy Graves, Paul Hartigan, Kim J. Henry, Stephen P. Henry, Bob Howdeshell, Thomas D. Howe (compiler), Susan Hoyle, James R. Human, David M. Johnson, Kristine Johnson, Evan Kidd, Bridget McNew, Julie Moore, Brian Ostby, Dee Ann Ostby, Logan Rosenberg, Martha Rudolph, Michael G. Ryon, Gail Todd, Harumi Tsuruoka, Jimmy Tucker, June D. Welch, Lucas Wilson, Valerie Wininger, and Randy C. Winstead.

Elizabethton (ELIZ) - 0415-2200. Weather: clear/cloudy; wind light and variable; 40-77° F. Count highlights included Common Merganser, Ruffed Grouse, Sora, Northern Saw-whet Owl, Hermit Thrush, Purple Finch, and Red Crossbill. Observers: Cyd Abernathy, Fred Alsop, Rob Armistead, Betty Bailey, Gary Bailey, Jerry Bevins, Rob Biller, Tammy Bright, Debi Campbell, J.G. Campbell, Ron Carrico, Harry Lee Farthing, Bambi Fincher, Dave Gardner, Bill Grigsby, Mike Hubley, Susan Hubley, Jackie Knight, Rick Knight (compiler), Roy Knispel, Chad Leedy, Richard Lewis, Priscilla Little, Vern Maddux, Larry McDaniel, Joe McGuiness, Eric Middlemas, Harry Norman, Brookie Potter, Jean Potter, Sherrie Quillen, Judi Sawyer, Chris Soto, Bryan Stevens, Kim Stroud, Laura Yohai, and Ralph Yohai.

Hamilton County (HAML) – 0350-2200. Weather: partly cloudy/clear; 57-74° F. Notable sightings included American Bittern, Sora, Warbling Vireo, Brown Creeper, 27 Northern Waterthrushes (new state high count), Swainson's and Connecticut warblers, and Lincoln's Sparrow. Observers: David Aborn, Harold Birch, Clyde Blum, Kevin Calhoon (compiler),

Bruce Dralle, Danny Gaddy, Bill Haley, Daniel Jacobson, Rhonda McCarty, Kevin McKinney, Barbara McMahan, Mike McMahan, Pete Robinson, Tommie Rogers, David Stone, Carl Swafford, Luke Thompson, Kristin Whitson, Stephanie Whitson, Cynthia Wilkerson, Jimmy Wilkerson, and Libby Wolfe.

Knox County (KNOX) – 0522-2013. Weather: clear/partly cloudy; wind W 0-12 mph; 43-54° F. Black-bellied Whistling Duck, Common Raven, and Swainson's Warbler were all new species for this count. More notable sightings included Gadwall, American Wigeon, Red-breasted Merganser, Peregrine Falcon, Sedge and Marsh wrens, American Pipit, Orange-crowned Warbler, Lincoln's Sparrow, and Purple Finch. Observers: Amy Abercrombie, Robert Abercrombie, Katheryn Albercht, Mark Armstrong, Zachary Arnold, Renata Beco, Eric Bodker, Josh Boucher, Doug Bruce, Clinton Carvill, Caroline Cooley, Andrew Core, Howard Cox, James Davis, Tara Davis, Jeremy Dotson, Stephanie Dotson, Karen Eagle, Tyler, Edmondson, K. Dean Edwards (compiler), Melinda Fawver, Kelly Fox, Lois Frisbee, Cheryl Greenacre, Dottie Habel, Kaitlyne Hakes, Molly Hampton, Patricia Harmon, Paul Hartigan, Paul Heitmann, Angela Hoffman, Nathaniel Hoffman-McConchie, Matt Horton, Jeffrey House, Susan Hoyle, James Human, Kathy Jinks, Kristine Johnson, Michelle Johnson, Susie Kaplar, Bill Keeler, Evan Kidd, Luke Lewis, Pasquel Lozengue, Seth McConchie, Lauren McDonald, Stephany McNew, Janet Meier, Jessica Moore, David Parmly, Jilynn Parmly, Michael Plaster, Joe Pyle, Dawson Rader, Aimee Riley, Kelly Roy, Martha Rudolph, Sheila Rygwelski, Michael Ryon, Beth Schilling, Carra Simpson, Aniket Somwanshi, Colin Sumrall, Laura Tappan, Nora Taylor, Merikay Waldvogel, Victoria Walton, Chris Welsh, Jacob Wessels, Shane Williams, and Heather Wilson.

Montgomery County (MONT) – 0440-1830. Weather: cloudy/intermittent showers; wind SSE/WNW 3-7 mph; 62-79° F. Notable highlights included Long-billed Dowitcher, Least Flycatcher, Bobolink, and Canada Warbler. Observers: Tammy Devine, Elaine Foust (compiler), Joe Hall, Debbie Hamilton, Steve Hamilton, Cyndi Routledge, Steve Routledge, Rick Shipkowski, and Sue Shipkowski.

Nashville (NASH) – 0530-2130. Weather: sunny/partly cloudy; 57-80° F. Count highlights included Red-breasted Merganser, Peregrine Falcon, Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, Marsh Wren, 32 species of warblers, and Dickcissel. Observers: Krista Allen, Kim Bailey, Kevin Bowden, Susan Bradfield, Trae Bradfield, Rachel Brenner, Lise Brown, Deana McNett Burke, Joel Bruyere, Phillip Casteel, Marie Connors, Richard Connors, Laura Cook, Bob English, Bonnie Fekel, Frank Fekel, Avery Fish, Adrianna Gerdeman, Graham Gerdeman, Steve Goodbred, Jon Gothald, Mark Hackney, Barbara Harris (compiler), Didi Jackson, John Kell, Roy McGraw, Tera Rica Murdock, Colton Mulligan, Amy Pardo, Benjamin Pardo, Janice Pearson, Jordan Rex, Tim Ryan, Tom Seador, Jan K. Shaw, Kathy Shaw, Sheila Shay, Chris Sloan, Laura Smith, Michael Smith, Shelley Smith, Nathan Snell, Marcus Snyder, Nick Stockmaster, Pandy Upchurch, LinnAnn Welch, Grant Winter, and Paul Yoder.

Shelby County (SHLB) – 0630-1900. Weather: partly cloudy; 68-83° F. Count highlights included Northern Bobwhite, Anhinga, Sora, Black-bellied Plover, Bell's Vireo, Bank Swallow, and Painted Bunting. Observers: Bruce Batt, Judith Barrie, Ivy Bivens, Bill Bullock, Taylor Cates, Marie Chrisman, Max Chrisman, Nick Chrisman, Emily Conant, Gina Cox, Marshall Cox, Alli Dillard, Sophie Dismukes, Gregg Elliot, Adrian Hall, Elizabeth Hall, Margaret Jefferson, Perry Larimer, Jacob Newby, Weston Notestine, George Payne, Mary Schmidt, Caroline Schratz-Lovett, Norman Soskel, Cathy Souther, Allan Trentley, Cliff VanNostrand, Deon VanNostrand, Jim Varner, Anita Vincent, and John Whirley. Dick Preston was the non-participating compiler.

COUNTY DATE SPECIES	SHLB 13-May	MONT 13-May	NASH 6-May	HAML 6-May	KNOX 23-Apr	BLNT 13-May	ELIZ 6-May	Totals
Black-bellied Whistling-Duck	15	-	-	-	2	-	-	17
Canada Goose	206	106	161	292	324	259	534	1882
Wood Duck	14	13	65	30	24	52	24	222
Blue-winged Teal	21	-	25	14	36	4	13	113
Northern Shoveler	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Gadwall	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
American Wigeon	-	-	1	-	5	-	1	7
Mallard	28	6	102	58	55	59	126	434
Hooded Merganser	1	-	1	-	-	20	1	23
Common Merganser	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2
Red-breasted Merganser	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	2
Northern Bobwhite	2	2	6	-	-	7	-	17
Wild Turkey	4	36	43	11	35	28	33	190
Ruffed Grouse	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Pied-billed Grebe	-	-	2	2	-	-	-	4
Rock Pigeon	28	8	17	177	39	19	102	390
Eurasian Collared-Dove	-	-	1	10	-	1	1	13
Mourning Dove	59	48	91	232	215	267	194	1106
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	7	8	2	2	1	17	1	38
Black-billed Cuckoo	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Common Nighthawk	2	-	-	-	-	3	1	6
Chuck-will's-widow	-	2	-	6	1	16	12	37
Eastern Whip-poor-will	1	-	10	46	-	6	17	80
Chimney Swift	52	4	66	155	403	196	97	973
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	29	6	18	13	10	8	25	109
Virginia Rail	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	2
Sora	1	-	-	1	3	-	1	6
American Coot	1	-	6	6	-	-	-	13
Black-necked Stilt	75	-	-	-	-	-	-	75
Black-bellied Plover	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Semipalmated Plover	3	-	3	-	-	-	-	6
Killdeer	30	26	24	78	31	22	32	243
Stilt Sandpiper	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
Dunlin	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
Least Sandpiper	445	1	4	16	-	12	27	505
White-rumped Sandpiper	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Pectoral Sandpiper	17	1	-	-	-	-	3	21
Semipalmated Sandpiper	43	-	2	-	-	1	2	48
Short-billed Dowitcher	8	-	1	-	-	-	-	9
Long-billed Dowitcher	5	3	-	-	-	-	-	8
Wilson's Snipe	-	-	-	4	4	3	1	12
Spotted Sandpiper	2	3	16	5	9	13	60	108
Solitary Sandpiper	2	4	21	17	18	11	32	105
Lesser Yellowlegs	14	-	-	7	1	-	7	29
Greater Yellowlegs	2	-	1	1	9	1	3	17
Bonaparte's Gull	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	3
Ring-billed Gull	-	-	20	4	3	-	-	27
Least Tern	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	6
Forster's Tern	-	-	4	8	-	-	-	12
Common Loon	-	-	10	3	-	-	8	21
Anhinga	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Double-crested Cormorant	-	-	261	33	98	13	186	591
American White Pelican	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	2
American Bittern	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	2
Least Bittern	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Great Blue Heron	18	10	65	61	53	41	78	326

COUNTY DATE SPECIES	SHLB 13-May	MONT 13-May	NASH 6-May	HAML 6-May	KNOX 23-Apr	BLNT 13-May	ELIZ 6-May	Totals
Great Egret	6	1	4	1	2	-	1	15
Green Heron	5	2	4	13	17	13	6	60
Black-crowned Night-Heron	-	-	3	-	1	2	1	7
Yellow-crowned Night-Heron	-	-	2	-	-	4	3	9
Black Vulture	21	45	226	93	31	35	91	542
Turkey Vulture	9	36	42	58	45	70	94	354
Osprey	2	4	14	61	36	11	10	138
Northern Harrier	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
Sharp-shinned Hawk	-	-	-	-	1	2	-	3
Cooper's Hawk	2	1	8	8	11	5	9	44
Accipiter sp.	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
Bald Eagle	1	-	9	11	12	3	6	42
Mississippi Kite	125	-	-	-	-	-	-	125
Red-shouldered Hawk	15	5	10	18	12	16	6	82
Broad-winged Hawk	1	-	10	5	5	6	8	35
Red-tailed Hawk	5	3	26	9	15	14	25	97
Barn Owl	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Eastern Screech-Owl	1	-	1	1	6	3	7	19
Great Horned Owl	1	3	-	2	2	6	1	15
Barred Owl	11	6	7	4	1	3	4	36
Northern Saw-whet Owl	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Belted Kingfisher	4	2	10	13	15	5	15	64
Red-headed Woodpecker	8	2	3	14	1	7	4	39
Red-bellied Woodpecker	69	25	78	125	134	92	83	606
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	-	-	-	-	1	-	6	7
Downy Woodpecker	39	11	57	74	58	49	33	321
Hairy Woodpecker	5	4	8	4	16	9	8	54
Northern Flicker	1	1	9	11	21	27	33	103
Pileated Woodpecker	18	6	22	22	20	25	31	144
American Kestrel	3	2	8	2	4	1	4	24
Peregrine Falcon	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	2
Great Crested Flycatcher	34	27	61	42	7	53	25	249
Western Kingbird	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
Eastern Kingbird	23	11	68	64	37	35	70	308
Scissor-tailed Flycatcher	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Eastern Wood-Pewee	34	43	41	21	-	29	13	181
Acadian Flycatcher	32	21	36	2	-	11	7	109
Willow Flycatcher	-	1	-	-	-	6	-	7
Least Flycatcher	1	2	3	-	-	1	14	21
Eastern Phoebe	14	13	16	35	31	75	86	270
White-eyed Vireo	54	25	114	38	35	58	17	341
Bell's Vireo	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Yellow-throated Vireo	7	6	19	21	2	10	7	72
Blue-headed Vireo	-	2	3	2	3	14	54	78
Philadelphia Vireo	3	3	1	-	-	1	-	8
Warbling Vireo	8	6	23	1	1	-	18	57
Red-eyed Vireo	71	19	88	166	44	186	221	795
Blue Jay	39	18	138	170	227	176	197	965
American Crow	49	49	102	218	211	186	294	1109
Fish Crow	12	-	1	28	13	9	11	74
Crow sp.	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	3
Common Raven	-	-	-	-	1	2	16	19
Carolina Chickadee	72	22	148	116	220	165	121	864
Tufted Titmouse	90	51	155	166	207	167	148	984
Bank Swallow	3	-	1	-	-	6	-	10
Tree Swallow	2	7	39	64	373	131	193	809

COUNTY DATE SPECIES	SHLB 13-May	MONT 13-May	NASH 6-May	HAML 6-May	KNOX 23-Apr	BLNT 13-May	ELIZ 6-May	Totals
Northern Rough-winged Swallow	17	14	75	93	148	44	75	466
Purple Martin	15	-	58	36	27	43	63	242
Barn Swallow	69	37	83	99	172	115	146	721
Cliff Swallow	185	25	133	406	220	207	530	1706
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	-	-	7	1	29	1	2	40
Golden-crowned Kinglet	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	3
Cedar Waxwing	127	21	106	46	33	210	44	587
Red-breasted Nuthatch	-	-	-	-	5	-	12	17
White-breasted Nuthatch	9	8	69	30	39	29	23	207
Brown-headed Nuthatch	-	-	-	32	6	6	1	45
Brown Creeper	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	59	21	141	89	123	74	69	576
Carolina Wren	38	46	171	110	242	251	179	1037
House Wren	-	5	9	10	29	34	63	150
Winter Wren	-	-	-	-	-	-	7	7
Sedge Wren	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	3
Marsh Wren	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	2
Gray Catbird	5	6	15	25	22	63	45	181
Brown Thrasher	5	13	42	79	76	93	69	377
Northern Mockingbird	31	45	95	103	163	138	126	701
European Starling	165	101	284	784	350	342	540	2566
Eastern Bluebird	41	63	105	141	108	129	159	746
Veery	1	2	21	14	-	2	17	57
Gray-cheeked Thrush	2	1	12	5	-	4	-	24
Swainson's Thrush	29	11	139	49	1	23	1	253
Hermit Thrush	-	-	-	-	2	-	2	4
Wood Thrush	15	20	75	47	24	31	74	286
American Robin	79	85	232	350	447	393	661	2247
House Sparrow	28	34	28	97	28	35	55	305
House Finch	9	48	94	78	183	161	61	634
Purple Finch	-	-	-	-	3	-	1	4
Red Crossbill	-	-	-	-	-	1	3	4
Pine Siskin	-	-	-	-	-	1	19	20
American Goldfinch	25	19	107	77	116	119	249	712
Grasshopper Sparrow	-	-	-	1	3	8	-	12
Chipping Sparrow	12	30	44	121	50	59	86	402
Field Sparrow	2	44	158	57	99	76	34	470
Dark-eyed Junco	-	-	-	-	-	1	44	45
White-crowned Sparrow	-	-	5	-	9	-	1	15
White-throated Sparrow	4	3	27	16	156	8	9	223
Savannah Sparrow	4	2	5	38	34	1	2	86
Song Sparrow	-	16	20	86	149	146	252	669
Lincoln's Sparrow	-	-	5	1	1	-	-	7
Swamp Sparrow	-	-	3	5	14	1	1	24
Eastern Towhee	8	49	100	95	158	95	147	652
Yellow-breasted Chat	8	18	95	36	8	45	5	215
Bobolink	9	2	22	12	-	1	-	46
Eastern Meadowlark	23	38	60	21	45	63	62	312
Orchard Oriole	11	7	78	30	19	24	32	201
Baltimore Oriole	9	1	20	3	3	3	32	71
Red-winged Blackbird	58	68	148	184	274	213	320	1265
Brown-headed Cowbird	89	49	101	62	110	98	58	567
Common Grackle	49	22	156	164	176	230	322	1119
Ovenbird	1	1	7	9	2	28	136	184
Worm-eating Warbler	1	-	6	14	1	13	25	60
Louisiana Waterthrush	3	1	9	3	3	10	26	55

COUNTY DATE SPECIES	SHLB 13-May	MONT 13-May	NASH 6-May	HAML 6-May	KNOX 23-Apr	BLNT 13-May	ELIZ 6-May	Totals
Northern Waterthrush	1	-	19	27	4	1	-	52
Golden-winged Warbler	-	-	2	-	-	-	4	6
Blue-winged Warbler	-	-	6	2	-	-	-	8
Black-and-white Warbler	1	-	12	24	2	25	75	139
Prothonotary Warbler	32	20	28	4	6	6	-	96
Swainson's Warbler	2	-	-	2	1	4	11	20
Tennessee Warbler	61	12	117	68	-	8	1	267
Orange-crowned Warbler	-	-		2	2	-		4
Nashville Warbler	-	-	8	6	1	-	-	15
Connecticut Warbler	-	-		1	-	-		1
Mourning Warbler	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Kentucky Warbler	12	4	26	10	1	4	3	60
Common Yellowthroat	9	29	162	30	48	69	28	375
Hooded Warbler	10	3	11	37	11	46	152	270
American Redstart	22	5	22	22	1	18	11	101
Cape May Warbler	-	-	9	10	3	1	4	27
Cerulean Warbler	1	-	1	2	-	-	-	4
Northern Parula	49	18	83	7	21	38	47	263
Magnolia Warbler	14	2	7	8	-	2	6	39
Bay-breasted Warbler	6	1	17	14	-	4	1	43
Blackburnian Warbler	-	2	10	4	-	-	6	22
Yellow Warbler	7	7	31	43	2	5	7	102
Chestnut-sided Warbler	23	-	10	14	-	2	15	64
Blackpoll Warbler	-	3	26	10	1	7	2	49
Black-throated Blue Warbler	-	-	2	4	-	-	79	85
Palm Warbler	-	-	87	43	30	-	1	161
Pine Warbler	3	-	5	55	23	16	10	112
Yellow-rumped Warbler	6	2	60	40	82	-	21	211
Yellow-throated Warbler	5	5	42	9	6	7	41	115
Prairie Warbler	6	10	86	58	6	10	1	177
Black-throated Green Warbler	2	-	25	29	8	21	62	147
Canada Warbler	3	1	2	6	-	2	35	49
Summer Tanager	59	34	90	42	9	7	-	241
Scarlet Tanager	2	4	52	54	11	19	55	197
Northern Cardinal	129	100	354	234	557	351	260	1985
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	19	10	50	38	10	7	18	152
Blue Grosbeak	14	10	17	26	8	19	3	97
Indigo Bunting	118	59	246	112	15	185	88	823
Painted Bunting	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Dickcissel	54	7	1	-	-	2	2	66
Total individuals	3976	2096	7570	7857	8051	7369	9569	46488
Total species	145	114	155	148	141	145	153	206
Observers	31	9	48	22	71	36	35	252
Parties	10	5	11	9	45	24	16	120
Party hours	33	32	84.83	66	123.27	129.89	103	571.99
Hours by car	10.5	16.75	19.17	35	8.47	25.08	-	114.97
Hours by foot	22.5	15.25	65.66	31	114.8	104.81	-	354.02
Hours by canoe or other	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Miles by car	38	165	214.5	280	107.63	272.78	-	1077.91
Miles by foot	20.5	9.2	50.23	30	96.43	54.38	-	260.74
Miles by canoe or other	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Hours owling	-	1.5	0.42	2	1.2	7.33	7.5	19.95
Miles owling	-	13.2	-	15	2.88	6.25	-	37.33
Feeder observers	-	4	-	-	-	12	2	18
Feeder hours	-	4	-	-	8.75	10.83	3	26.58

MINUTES OF THE SPRING BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

Nashville, Tennessee
29 April 2023

The annual Spring meeting was held in Nashville 28 – 30 April and hosted by the Nashville Chapter. The Board of Directors meeting was held 29 April. President Michael Collins called the meeting to order at 1:31 pm; Secretary Cyndi Routledge confirmed there was a quorum present. Minutes of the fall meeting were approved upon the correction of minor typographical errors.

OFFICERS REPORTS

Treasurer – Pam Lasley - Assets for the Society at the end of 2022 totaled $385,018 including cash of $3,240 and fair market value of our Vanguard investments at $381,736. Our investments had a very rough year, with a loss in market value of $92,766. Fifteen thousand dollars was transferred to our operating checking account this year.

Non-investment revenue for the year was $15,002 for memberships and subscriptions and $727 from contributions. Total expenses were $31,074. Publications and communications at $13,220 are our largest expenses and include 3 issues of *The Migrant,* the last hard copy edition of *The Tennessee Warbler,* website maintenance contract, and expenses related to the integration of our local websites. We awarded $8,900 in research and conservation grants plus the final payment of $5,000 to the Swan Conservation Trust. Overall, the net expenses over revenues were $90,630, however, excluding loss of investments market value, our net income was $2,135

Dividends and interest for 2022 were $17,463. While we feel our asset mix is a sound one for the long term, our market value declined significantly, as did all markets in 2022. The S and P benchmark fell 18% last year. Investment performance was -16.3% for the one-year return, 3 year annualized is 3.3%, 5 year is 5.3%, and 10 year annualized return on investments is 7.4%. Our portfolio mix is 56% stocks, 37% bonds, and 8% short term reserves.

Total individual membership increased 5.6 % to 732. Bristol, Memphis and Nashville have had the largest percentage increase. At-Large, Herndon, and Knoxville are down in 2022.

2023: TOS remains in excellent financial condition. Revenues, expenses and publications are running as expected, with individual memberships roughly the same as last year.

The Conservation and Research Funding Committee has awarded $2,255 in grants this year out of a budgeted $20,000. *The Migrant* publications are running as scheduled, and *The Tennessee Warbler* e-mail roll-out has been successful. There are still members that either do not have an e-mail address or have not provided one, but all publications are available on the TOS website.

At the end of the first quarter of 2023 the Vanguard investment account has increased in value by $21,109, and we have transferred $10,000 to our operating account. Our investment portfolio has historically weathered downturns in the market, and I expect this will be true for the current challenging economic climate.

The Migrant – Editor Bob Ford sent a report that he and Graham Gerdeman, the new Season editor, have changed the format of the Season to make it more readable and better reflect the significat sightings of the season.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Conservation Research and Funding – Dr. Michael Collins, chair, reported two grants have been awarded, one to Warner Park in Nashville to study Northern Saw-whet Owls in winter and another to Venezuela for research and educational awareness. A motion was made that all grant recipients be required to submit a report of their project upon completion so that the information may be published or presented at a Fall meeting paper session. The motion was approved.

Website – Cyndi Routledge – Progress has taken place regarding efforts to move the chapter sites to the TOS website including existing sites moved to one server, eliminating separate costs to each Chapter, and domain names moved to one company for consistency. Completed sites include the main TOS site, Kingsport, Buffalo River, Memphis, Nashville, Memphis, and Knoxville Chapters. Once all Chapter sites have been completed an additional menu will be added to the TOS page to link all the Chapters.

Finance – As required by the constitution an examination of the 2022 financial records was performed by the finance committee and was found to be in good standing.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made and passed; the meeting was adjourned at 3:12 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Cyndi Routledge, Secretary

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL SPRING MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Nashville, Tennessee
29 April 2023

The meeting was called to order by President Dr. Michael Collins at 6:52 pm. He thanked the Ganier family for hosting the evening's event at their farm, welcomed our guests and speaker Noah Strycker, and thanked the Nashville Chapter for a wonderful weekend meeting. Secretary Cyndi Routledge confirmed that a quorum had been met.

President Michael Collins then briefed the membership on the following items:

- TOS remains in a strong financial position, and he thanked Pam Lasley and Mac McWhirter for their work to help the organization remain solvent in order to continue to work for conservation and birds in Tennessee.
- The Fall 2023 meeting has tentatively been scheduled for Chattanooga pending approval by the Chapter's Board of Directors.
- The Annual Spring 2024 meeting will be hosted by the Knoxville Chapter, date to be determined.
- TOS grant recipients will be required to submit a report of their work that will be published or presented at a Fall meeting paper session.

President Michael Collins presented the following Slate of Nominees to serve TOS for the next 2-year term:

President – Michael Collins
Secretary – Cyndi Routledge
Treasurer – Pam Lasley
VP - East TN – Chris Welsh
VP - Middle TN – Steve Routledge
VP - West TN – Dick Preston

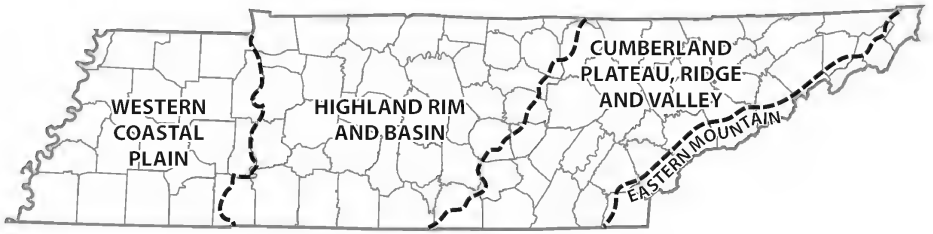
Directors at Large:
East TN - Susan Hubley
Middle TN - Mac McWhirter
West TN -Allan Trentley

President Collins called for any additional nominations from the floor. Having none, a motion was made to accept the slate as presented; passed unanimously. President Collins thanked and welcomed those members who volunteered to serve.

A motion was made and passed to adjourn the meeting at 7:05 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Cyndi Routledge, Secretary

THE SPRING SEASON



Graham Gerdeman, Editor

1 March – 31 May 2023

Temperatures in March were close to the seasonal average across the state, yet this was largely due to much higher-than-normal temperatures at the start and close of the month, interrupted by unseasonably cold weather in the middle. April continued this roller coaster effect, beginning with temperatures that were 4-8°F above average the first week, then cooling, warming, and ending the month with a significant chill which dropped to 6-10°F colder than normal for the last week of the month. There were 26 broken and 12 tied daily high temperature records in early April, yet most parts of the state ended the month under frost and freeze warnings. May started cool and warmed to average and then slightly above average, but without significant extremes.

Precipitation generally started wet and ended dry. Northern parts of Middle Tennessee, the Cumberland Plateau, and the Eastern Mountains recorded lower than average rainfall in March. The rest of the state exhibited above average rainfall, with 2-4" recorded in the westernmost counties (2 to 3 times higher than normal) during the first week of the month, and multiple highest daily rainfall records set. The rest of the season generally maintained a drying trend, punctuated by several rounds of strong storms and locally heavy rainfall which make statewide averages appear misleading. The Eastern Ridge and Valley remained particularly dry. The U.S. Drought Monitor found slightly more than 15% of Tennessee to be in abnormally dry conditions by the first week of May [1].

Notable sightings this season included a pair of Mottled Ducks at Duck River Unit of the Tennessee National Wildlife Refuge (DRU) in Humphreys County. There are approximately fifteen Tennessee records. Red-necked and Eared Grebes were each reported in three different counties. Common Gallinules were in five counties. There were reports of King Rail in two counties, and a Yellow Rail in Lauderdale County, providing hope for the perseverance of cryptic rallids. Nearby in taxonomic order, Limpkins were found in five different counties in the Western Coastal Plain, including multiple birds in at least three locations, part of an unprecedented irruption. Shorebird records included a single Ruff, as well a new early spring arrival for Black-necked Stilts. There were two reports of Whimbrels and Hudsonian Godwits in two western counties, and a new state high count of 135 Short-billed Dowitchers in Lauderdale County. An Eastern Willet (*T. s. semipalmata*) found in Middle Tennessee constitutes a remarkable inland record of that subspecies, pending acceptance by the Tennessee Bird Records Committee (TBRC). Individual Little Gulls were reported from both the Mississippi River and East Tennessee. A very rare report of Arctic Tern came in from DRU, possibly a sixth record for the state. Bell's Vireos appear to be doing very well in

several locations in the Western Coastal Plain, including a new state high count of eleven. Yellow-headed Blackbirds were reported in West, Middle, and East Tennessee. Additional interesting and notable sightings continue below.

Sightings are extracted from eBird [2], as well as submissions from regional compilers, the tnbirds listserv, and when necessary, verified social media posts. Comments on historical records rely on *Birds of Tennessee: A New Annotated Checklist* [3], archives of the tnbirds listserv as well as subsequent eBird records, and submissions to the Tennessee Bird Records Committee.

Regional Season Editors:
Western Coastal Plain Region: Dick D. Preston, Munford, TN
Highland Rim and Basin Region: Graham Gerdeman, Nashville, TN
Cumberland Plateau/Ridge and Valley Region: Bruce Dralle, Chattanooga, TN

STANDARD ABBREVIATIONS

ad - adult
ba - banded
Co - County
ers - earliest reported sighting
et al. - and others
fide - reported by
im - immature
lrs - latest reported sighting
max - maximum count
m.ob. - many observers
Mtn - Mountain
NWR - National Wildlife Refuge
photo - photo on eBird
SNA - State Natural Area
SP - State Park
WMA - Wildlife Management Area
yg - young

Locations: SBP - "Snow Bunting Peninsula" on Old Hickory Lake, Davidson Co; DRU - Duck River Unit of Tennessee NWR, Humphreys Co; Ensley - Ensley Bottoms, including the EARTH Complex and TVA Lake, southwest Shelby Co; Lock 3 - Old Hickory Lake, Sumner Co; LBL - Land Between the Lakes National Recreation Area.

Black-bellied Whistling Duck: reported in multiple locations outside of their stronghold in Shelby Co, including Davidson Co (1) SBP, 8 Mar (ph, RS); likely the same bird in Sumner Co (1), Drake's Creek, 8 Mar (ph, GG); Davidson Co (1) Shelby Bottoms Park, 24 Mar (ph, FF, m.ob.); Sullivan Co (1) Warrior's Path SP 17 Apr (BFi, SQ), second county record; Knox Co (2) Pellissippi State Community College, 19 Apr–15 May (Shane Williams, ph, m.ob.); Franklin Co (2), 27 Mar (ph, RSh, DSh); Dickson Co (1) Luther Lake, 28 Apr, first county record (ph, Cynthia Hernandez); Humphreys Co (13) DRU, 1 May (RS); Weakley Co (1) 9 May (Marion Pitts); Obion Co (1) 19 May (ph, Laura Lofton); Lauderdale Co (4) Chickasaw NWR, 14 May (DR).

Trumpeter Swan: First county record for Hamilton Co (2) Soddy Lake, 31 Mar until last reported 8 Apr (ph, DRJ, m.ob.).

Tundra Swan: Four records in the east, including Rhea Co (3) continuing birds on Watts Bar Lake since December, 1 and 4 Mar (RSh, DSh, m.ob.); Hamilton Co (1) Chester Frost Park, 2–4 Mar (ph, SWh, KWh, m.ob.); Roane Co (1) Watts Bar Lake, 21 Mar (ph, RK); Hamblen Co (1) HWY 160 Water Treatment Plant, 6–11 Mar (ph, SHu, m.ob); The only

report outside of east TN was a rare sighting from Davidson Co (1) J. Percy Priest Lake, Cook Rec Area, 5 Mar (ph, Paul Edelman). The most recent report before this in Nashville was from 2012.

Mottled Duck: Humphreys Co (2) DRU, 31 May (ph, DR) fourth record from this location since 2011 and only about the fifteenth for the state.

Green-winged Teal: lingered into May in 3 locations: Dyer Co (5) White Lake Refuge, 1 May (MAG) and (2) 5 May (RS); Humphreys Co (1) DRU, 1 May (RS, AF); Shelby Co (1) until 19 May, Ensley (lrs, ph, CRu).

Surf Scoter: Shelby Co (2) Mud Island, 17 Mar (RS); Davidson Co (1) J. Percy Priest Lake, Cook Rec Area, 17 May (ph, JA).

White-winged Scoter: Hamilton Co (1) Webb Rd, 2 Mar (BD), and (1) Chester Frost Park, 22 Mar (SWh, KWh); Sullivan Co: (4) South Holston Lake, 31 Mar (DC, fide RLK).

Common Merganser: Now an established breeding species in the foothills of Great Smoky Mountains NP, especially along the Little River in Blount Co, several records of multiple birds in good territory represent possible breeding expansion in far northeast TN. Carter Co (2) male and female pair, Watauga River, 12 Mar (ph, DC); Washington Co (9), Nolichucky River 10 Mar (Brookie Potter, Jean Potter); Johnson Co (2) male and female pair, Doe Creek, 15 Apr, (ph, Julie Moore).

Red-necked Grebe: Davidson Co (1) Radnor Lake, 28 Feb - 6 Mar (lrs, Matthew Boling); Knox Co (1) from Feb, Concord Park until 22 Mar (lrs, JD); Grainger Co (1) Cherokee Lake, 4 Apr (ph, DH).

Eared Grebe: Davidson Co (2) several wintered on J. Percy Priest Lake and multiple sightings of one or two birds continued until a pair was last reported 23 Mar (ph, SL); Knox Co (1) Concord Park, 21 Mar (JD); Sullivan (1) South Holston Lake, 17 Mar (RLK) was the only report from this formerly regular wintering site.

White-winged Dove: Shelby Co had multiple reports from Mud Island and yards around Memphis. Most notable were birds on Mud Island photographed carrying nesting material 6 May (ph, RP). The only other Spring record was from Sumner Co (1), seen in a private yard 31 Mar (ph, Mike Dillard).

Eastern Whip-poor-will: Shelby Co (1) Monterey Rd, 3 May (CVN, DVN). This species is increasingly rare in Shelby Co and the far west region.

King Rail: Shelby Co (1) Arlington Wetlands, 29 Apr (RH); Fayette Co (1) Rossville Mitigation Site, 30 Apr (au, DP, BP).

Common Gallinule: Shelby Co (1) Ensley, 23 Apr (Van Harris); Hamilton Co (1) Standifer Gap Marsh, 29 - 30 Apr (Michael Ryon, ph, SWh, m.ob); Hawkins Co (1) John Sevier Lake, 12–13 May (ph, SH); Roane Co (1) Heritage Center Greenways, 27 - 29 May (au, RK,

au, Pat Phillips); Obion Co (1) Reelfoot NWR, 30 May (DR).

Yellow Rail: Lauderdale Co (1) Chickasaw NWR, 9 May (DR, MCT).

Limpkin: An unprecedented expansion of this range-restricted species, with reports from five counties. Shelby Co (1) in a horse pasture, 12 Apr (ph, RH); Meeman-Shelby Forest SP (1) 16 Apr (ph, CVN m.ob), and (2) 27 Apr (ph, Jeffrey Hill); Haywood Co (2) Hatchie NWR, 26 Apr (Bob Ford, m.ob.); Dyer Co (2) White Lake Refuge - one bird reported 29 Apr (ph, Kyle Bess), two birds the next day, 30 Apr (ph, Lisa Clifft), and continuing with m.ob. until one bird reported 13 May (ph, MAG, MCT); Gibson Co (1) Tigrett WMA, 3 May (ph, MAG); Obion Co (1) Reelfoot Lake NWR, Long Point Unit, 5 May (MAG); Obion Co (1) Reelfoot Lake NWR, Grassy Island Unit, 24 May (ph, Haley Holiman).

American Avocet: Sumner Co/Davidson Co (10) flock viewed from both Lock 3 and SBP, 21 Apr (ph, TLo, GG, m.ob), and a larger flock (35) in the same location 11 May (ph, MB, FF, m.ob); Humphreys Co (5) DRU 23, Apr (ph, RS); Stewart (10) Cross Creeks NWR, 26 Apr (ph, SR, CR).

Black-necked Stilt: arrived early across the regular range in the Western Coastal Plain region: Lake Co (1) Choctaw Fields, 6 Mar (ph, ers, DR) earliest arrival in the state by 10 days; Shelby Co (1) four days later on 10 Mar (ph, Jim Varner, Perry Larimer).

Upland Sandpiper: Lake Co (2) Lake Isom NWR, 13 Apr (MAG); Shelby Co (1) Shelby Farms Park, 5–6 May (ph, RP, CVN, m.ob).

White-rumped Sandpiper: Shelby Co (27) Ensley (CRu) highest spring count for the state.

Whimbrel: Dyer Co (1) White Lake Refuge, 9 May (MAG); Davidson Co (3) SBP, 20 May (ph, MS, m.ob).

Hudsonian Godwit: Shelby Co (3) Ensley - initially 2 were found 16 Apr (ph, PJP, m.ob), 3 birds were observed 17 Apr (ph, Paige Oneal, m.ob), last reported 2 May (ph, SW) Lauderdale Co (2) Chickasaw NWR, 9 May (ph, MCT, DR).

Marbled Godwit: Lauderdale Co (4) Chickasaw NWR, 21 Apr (ph, RS); Henry (1) Tennessee NWR, 22 Apr (ph, John Hewlett).

Short-billed Dowitcher: Lauderdale Co (135) Chickasaw NWR, 13 May (VS, RS, Obed Frixzen) new state high count.

Willet: Hamilton Co (200) MacIellan Island, 4 May (Ted Caldwell, BD) new high count for the county and a very high count for TN.

Willet (Eastern) (*T. s. semipalmata):* Davidson Co (1) J. Percy Priest Lake Dam, 5 May (ph, GG). If accepted, the first TN record of the eastern subspecies of Willet, and the furthest inland US record by more than 400 miles.

Ruddy Turnstone: Lauderdale Co (3) Chickasaw NWR, 10, 13, 17 May (ph, WB, MCT, RS, m.ob); Stewart Co (2) Cross Creeks NWR, 12 May (ph, Joe Hall); Shelby Co (6) Ensley 20 May, (ph, PJP, m.ob).

Ruff: Lake Co (1) Owl Hoot Rd transient pools 28 Mar (ph, MAG).

Sanderling: Davidson Co (1) SBP, 8 May (RS, ph, m.ob.); Stewart Co (1) Cross Creeks NWR, 12 May (ph, Joe Hall).

Wilson's Phalarope: Lauderdale Co (15) Chickasaw NWR, 22 Apr, highest of multiple reports (DR, RS, MAG) max; Shelby Co (8) Ensley (ph, Steve Bielamowicz, Anne Bielamowicz), also max count for the location; Haywood Co (2) Hatchie NWR, 5 May (ph, Steve Davis); Humphreys Co (1) DRU, 5 May (ph, DR); Dyer Co (1) White Lake Refuge, 5 May (RS); Lake Co (1) Tiptonville, 9 May (ph, Bob Butler); Sequatchie Co (1) Davis Rd Ponds, 9 May (ph, RSh, DSh, m.ob), possibly a first county record; Stewart Co (1) Cross Creeks NWR, 13 May (Melinda Welton).

Red-necked Phalarope: Davidson Co (1) SBP, 12 May (ph, MS, GG, m.ob); Shelby Co (1) Ensley, 19–20 May (ph, CRu, m.ob); Hamilton Co (1) Chickamauga Dam, 26 May (ph, TL).

Little Gull: Knox Co (1) Concord Park,15 Mar (ph, Ben McGrew) apparent first county record; Shelby Co (1) Mud Island, 21 Mar (CRu).

Laughing Gull: Obion Co (1) Reelfoot Lake, Lower Blue Basin, 21 Apr (RS); Hamilton Co (1) Chester Frost Park, 11 May (ph, TL); DeKalb Co (2) Edgar Evins SP, 25 May (ph, Mark Taylor).

Franklin's Gull: Knox Co (1) Concord Park,19 Mar (ph, JD, Kelly Roy, m.ob); likely the same bird reported on other side of lake in Blount Co (1) 21 Mar (ph, CB, m.ob); Hamilton Co (1) Chester Frost Park, 14 Apr (ph, SWh, KWh, BD); Davidson Co (1) SBP, 8 May (ph, RS); Sumner Co (2), Drake's Creek, 8 May (ph, GG, AF, Serena Pedane); (1) Lock 3, 11 May (ph, TLo).

Lesser Black-backed Gull: Three reports Henry Co: (1) Paris Landing, 6 Mar (Margaret Danyi); (1) Britton Ford, 10 Mar (DR); (2) Kentucky Lake, Eagle Creek Embayment, 10 Mar (DR); Sumner Co (1) ad Old Hickory Lake, Lock 3,12 Mar (ph, TLo); Hardin Co (4) Pickwick Lake Dam, 25 Mar (Damien Simbeck); Davidson Co (1) SBP, 8 May (ph, RS, Shelley Smith, m.ob).

Black Tern: Hamilton Co (1) rare spring record for county, Chester Frost Park, 8 May (ph, SWh, KWh).

Common Tern: Humphreys Co (167) DRU, 20 May (ph. RS) max, new third highest count for state.

Arctic Tern: Humphreys Co (1) DRU, 20 May (ph, RS). If accepted, a sixth state record

and the second for Humphreys Co.

Red-throated Loon: Sumner Co (1) Lock 3, 4 Mar (ph, AD, MD); 21 Mar (ph, TLo); Davidson Co (4) J. Percy Priest Lake, Anderson Rd Rec Area, Mar 12, (ph, AF); (4) J. Percy Priest Lake, Seven Points Rec Area, 18 Mar (Brad Dowd); SBP (2) 22 Mar (Robert Deegan); Grainger Co (1) Cherokee Lake (ph, DH).

Pacific Loon: Hamilton Co (1) Chester Frost Park, 4 Mar (Rachel Burgess, Andrew Burgess); Booker T. Washington SP (1) 7 and 11 Mar (KD, ph, SWh, KWh); Grainger Co (1) Cherokee Lake, Oakland Hollow, 5 Apr (RDH, DMy); Davidson Co (2) J. Percy Priest Lake - as many as two were seen from 12 Mar–23 Mar (ph, AF, Jenna Atma, m.ob), 13 Apr (ph, GG). Sumner and Davidson Cos (1) Old Hickory Lake, 8 May, fully alternate plumaged bird (TLo) Lock 3 and later by m.ob. from SBP. This constitutes the second latest spring date in the state and only the third May record - the most recent from the same location on 3 May 2021.

Anhinga: Blount Co (1) Kyker Bottoms, 27–29 Mar ad male (ph, RW, m.ob); Shelby Co (5) Meeman-Shelby Forest SP, 12 Apr–13 May (DDP, m.ob) max. Hamilton Co (2) one male bird, Volkswagen Wetland, 12 Apr (ph, Wolf Jedamski, ph, Libby Wolfe, m.ob), last reported 18 Apr as 2 birds, male and female, (PR); also (1) from Brainerd Levee, 29 Apr (BD) and 16 May (ph, SWh, KWh); Humphreys Co (1) 23 Apr, 27 Apr, 6 May (RS, ph, DR, WB); Henry Co (5) 1 May (ph, RWh); Dyer Co (2) Bogota WMA, 22 May (ph, MAG); Obion Co (1) Reelfoot NWR, Grassy Island Unit, 30 May (ph, DR).

Neotropic Cormorant: Continuing to expand in TN and reported from 5 different counties. Humphreys Co (5) present all season from 4 Mar–31 May at DRU with as many as 5 individuals reported 20 May, including recently fledged yg (ph, RS), providing solid evidence of continued successful nesting in Tennessee. This was first confirmed at DRU in 2021, but not documented in 2022; Shelby Co (3) Robco Lake, 31 Mar (ph, RS, RH, DR) max after reports of one and two birds in same location earlier in the month; Marion Co (1) Nickajack Dam 31 Mar (ph, TL), a first Marion Co record; Obion Co (1) Reelfoot Lake, Lower Blue Basin, 21 Apr (RS); Sumner Co (1) Drake's Creek, 18 Apr (TLo) and Old Hickory Dam (1) 21 May (ph, TLo). Neotropic Cormorants have been present during the breeding season on the Drake's Creek rookery since 2021, but nesting has yet to documented.

Brown Pelican: Knox Co (1) Lyons Bend, 23 May (Susan Hoyle). There are about 30 records for the state, with almost half of the records being from the past 8 years.

American Bittern: Reported in much higher than average numbers, with reports from 16 counties from 18 Mar–16 May. Five locations reported two or more birds. High counts were from Hamilton Co (4) Standifer Gap Marsh, 5 Apr (Avery Fish), where one to three birds were reported regularly from 25 Mar–5 May; Humphreys Co (3) DRU, 23 Apr (ph. RS).

Least Bittern: Blount Co (1) Kyker Bottoms, 4, 9 Apr,13 May (RW, Evan Kidd); Humphreys Co (1) 20 Apr (Julie Moore, Christie Bass); Hardin Co (1) 25 Apr (AJT); Shelby Co (1) Ensley (ph, PJP, m.ob); Obion Co (2) Reelfoot NWR, Grassy Island Unit, (ph, DR).

Glossy Ibis: Shelby Co (1) Ensley, 15 May (ph, Tricia Vesely).

White-faced Ibis: Lauderdale Co (1) Chickasaw NWR, 21–22 Apr (ph, RS, MAG, DR).

Glossy / White-faced Ibis - Shelby Co (1) Riverport Rd Sloughs, 31 May (Ted Cable).

Swallow-tailed Kite: Blount Co (1) 23 Apr (Richard Caylor), the only spring record in the state of this wandering species, which is far more likely in the late summer and fall. There are only 10 previous spring records in eBird for the state.

Golden Eagle - Hamilton Co (1) Chester Frost Park,13 Mar (DRJ, SWh, KWh); Franklin Co (1) Lost Cove Farm, 24 Mar (ph, Richard Candler).

Mississippi Kite: Greatly expanded in the state in recent years. Regular in many counties in west and middle TN, sightings of lone flyovers in Hamilton Co, 24 Mar (1) (Rhonda Carty) and 7 May (1) (KAC) were notable for the Chattanooga area.

Broad-winged Hawk: Gibson Co (1) Trenton, 6 Mar (ph, MAG). This appears to be the third earliest returning spring date.

Swainson's Hawk: Shelby Co (1) Ensley, 22 Apr (ph, CRu); Knox Co (1) Seven Islands, 3 May (ph, Kay White Carter)

Burrowing Owl: Humphreys Co (1) New Johnsonville TVA site (restricted) continuing until last recorded on camera monitor 9 Apr (Becky Seaton fide GG).

Short-Eared Owl: Blount Co (1) Cade's Cove, 5 Mar (SW, Margeaux Maerz); Montgomery Co (5) Jim Johnson Rd, 10 Mar (ph, AF); Fayette Co (1) Rossville Mitigation Site, 10 Apr (BP).

Prairie Falcon: Humphreys Co (1) DRU, 23 Apr (ph, RS).

Scissor-Tailed Flycatcher: Sumner Co (1) notable early report which tied the second earliest spring record for the state, 2 Apr (ph, MS, Melissa James, m.ob).

Alder Flycatcher: Carter Co (1) singing bird back on territory, Carver's Gap, Roan Mtn, 22 May (RLK).

Bell's Vireo: Dyer Co (1) White Lake Refuge, singing bird reported multiple times 5, 8, 9, 18 May (ph, RS, Todd Harvey, MAG, m.ob.), and Thorny Cypress WMA (11) 15 May (ph, DR) new state high count; Lauderdale Co (1) Chickasaw NWR, 9 and 10 May (ph, DR, MCT, WB); Lake Co (1) Tumbleweed WMA, 17 and 21 May (DR, Kyle Bess, MAG), and Port of Cates Landing (4) at least 4 singing birds 19 May, (ph, MAG); Shelby Co (1) Shelby Farms Park, singing male reported regularly 23–31 May near Solar Panel array (ph, BFo).

Fish Crow: Though it had been assumed, nesting was documented for the first time in

Davidson Co, Shelby Bottoms Park, 19 Apr (ph, Phillip Casteel). The population along the Cumberland River has increased dramatically, with a new high count (7) at Shelby Bottoms Park, 20 Apr (AD). The species has also been documented several times on the Stones River and J. Percy Priest Lake.

Common Raven: Sullivan Co (3) yg documented in nest under grandstand at the Bristol Motor Speedway, 13 Apr (Michele G. Sparks) in a previously documented location. The birds continued at the nest, even through spring race week.

Evening Grosbeak: Blount Co (5) Townsend, continuing from winter at an area feeder, 26–28 Mar (ph, Kathryn Barrow, RW, Harumi Umi); Washington Co (2) 6 Apr (Mary Barrett); Lewis Co (8) Hohenwald, 24 Mar–19 Apr, residential feeder (ph, Cindi Choate Baxter); Stewart Co (6) 14 Mar, LBL, South Information Center (ph, Don Blunk).

Lapland Longspur: Washington Co (1) Keebler Rd, 3 Mar (DC), only spring record this year.

Lark Sparrow: Hamilton Co (1) at feeder, 8 Apr (ph, Ed Wright) rare spring record for county.

Clay-colored Sparrow: Shelby Co (1) Ensley 2–4, May (ph, SW, m.ob).

Harris's Sparrow: Shelby Co (1) Shelby Farms Park, 25–29 Mar (ph, Tricia Vesely, DDP, m.ob).

LeConte's Sparrow: Shelby Co (9) max, Shelby Farms Park, Gardener Rd marsh, throughout March and April with a high count of nine, 2 Apr (ph, CRu) and lingering until at least three birds on 24 Apr (ph, CRu); A fairly late bird, Ensley, 1 Apr (RH); Humphreys Co (14) max, DRU, 18 Mar, (ph, DR, RS) highest state count for spring; Hardin Co (1) Walker Branch SNA, 22 Mar (ph, WB, RS); Fayette Co (1) Wolf River WMA, 2 Apr (ph, David O. Hill), and (2) Rossville Mitigation Site, 3 May (DP, BP); Lauderdale Co (3) Chickasaw NWR, 8 Apr (DR, WB).

Nelson's Sparrow: Lauderdale Co (2) Chickasaw NWR, 17 May (ph, au, DR). Two singing males – only spring report in state.

Spotted Towhee: Henry Co (1) continuing from winter season at a private location in Paris until last reported 1 Apr (ph, RWh).

Yellow-headed Blackbird: Shelby Co (1) Shelby Farms, Gardener Rd marsh, 5–6 May (ph, RP Adrian Hall); Blount Co (1) feeders at private home, 9 Apr (ph, Nancy Crandall), an apparent first Co record; Perry Co (1) private farm, 10 May (ph, Johnny Troyer), first Perry Co record; Washington Co (1) Limestone, 29 May (ph, WM).

Western Meadowlark: Humphreys Co (1) DRU, 4 Mar (RS) rare record east of the Western Coastal Plain; Dyer Co (1) 6 Mar (DR); Lake Co (1) 6 Mar (DR), 23 Mar (AJT); Obion Co (2) 10 Mar (ph, MAG); Shelby Co (2) max Ensley, 17–25 Mar (ph, RH, BFo, m.ob) and

(1) Shelby Farms, 19 Mar (ph, CRu).

Brewer's Blackbird: Shelby Co (5) Wolf River Greenway, 12 Mar (SD); Ensley, (1) 25 Mar (PJP); Shelby Farms Park (1) 25 Mar, (ph, SD); Hardin Co (16) Coffee Landing Rd pond (RS, WB); Marion Co (2) 22 Mar (TR); Humphreys Co (1) DRU, 25 Mar (RS, WB); Lake Co (2) Owl Hoot Rd transient pools, 28 Mar (ph, MAG).

Painted Bunting: Cheatham Co (1) ad female, Cheatham WMA, 2 May (DR). Rare outside of Shelby Co.

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[1] 2023 Tennessee State Climate Summary, Tennessee Climate Office, East Tennessee State University, Prepared by William Tollefson and Dr. Andrew Joyner.
[2] eBird Basic Dataset. Version: EBD_relFeb-2023. Cornell Lab of Ornithology, Ithaca, New York. Feb 2023.
[3] Somershoe, S. G. and Sloan, C. A. 2015. Birds of Tennessee: A New Annotated Checklist. Privately Published.

OBSERVERS

JA – Jim Arnett
WB – Wade Baker
CB – Christie Bass
MB – Matthew Bowling
KAC - Kevin Calhoun
DC – Debi Campbell
SD – Sophie Dismukes
JD – Jeremy Dotson
BD – Bruce Dralle
KD – Kent DuBois
AD – Ariel Dunham
MD – Marjorie Dunham
FF - Frank Fekel
BF – Bambi Fincher
AF – Avery Fish
BFo – Bob Foehring
GG – Graham Gerdeman
MAG – Mark A. Greene
RH – Rob Harbin
DH – Dallas Herrell
RDH – Ron D. Hoff
SH – Susan Hurley
DRJ – Daniel R. Jacobson
RLK – Richard L. Knight
RK – Roger Kroodsma
SL – Steve Lasley
TL – Tim Lenz
TLo – Tim Loyd
WM – Warren Massey
DM – Dollyann Myers
BP – Brayden Paulk
DP - Darrell Paulk
DDP – Dick Preston
RP – Ryan Pudwell
PJP – P.J. Pulliam
SQ – Sherrie Quillen
DR – Daniel Redwine
PR – Pete Robinson
TR – Tommis Rogers
CR – Cyndi Routledge
SR – Steve Routledge
CRu – Cameron Ruff
DSh – Debbie Shannon
RSh – Roi Shannon
MS – Michael Smith
RS – Ruben Stoll
VS – Victor Stoll
MJT – Michael J. Todd
AJT – Allan Trentley
CVN – Cliff VanNostrand
DVN – Deon VanNostrand
RWh – Robert Wheat
KWh – Kristen Whitson
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RW – Randy Winstead
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The Migrant records observations and studies of birds in Tennessee and adjacent areas.

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CONTENTS

FIRST PHOTOGRAPHIC EVIDENCE OF A COMMON MERGANSER NEST IN TENNESSEE
Carol Story 25

EASTERN PHOEBE MAKES MULTIPLE VISITS TO A WHITE-TAILED DEER
T. David Pitts 28

2023 TENNESSEE SPRING BIRD COUINTS
Ron Hoff 31

MINUTES OF THE 2023 SPRING BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
Cyndi Routledge 37

THE SPRING SEASON: 1 MARCH – 31 MAY 2023
Graham Gerdeman 40